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IRQ43469.E

Iraq: Whether there are reports of the Islamic Dawa Party seeking revenge on members of the former secret forces and other perceived enemies; state protection available to those seen as supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime (2003-April 2005)

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Prior to the January 2005 election in Iraq, Shiite religious leaders, including leaders of the Islamic Dawa Party (IDP), declared that they would not seek revenge for violent acts by Sunni extremists (AP 24 Jan. 2005; *ibid.* 25 Jan. 2005; *USA Today* 25 Jan. 2005). Reports of specific incidents of revenge by the Islamic Dawa Party (IDP) on members of the former secret forces or other members of the former Saddam Hussein regime could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, the following information may be of interest.

A 25 February 2005 Knight Ridder article discusses a "wave of violence" against former members of the Saddam Hussein regime and members of the Baath party (Knight Ridder 25 Feb. 2005). The article states that Shiite "assassins," or "vigilantes," are exacting "street justice" by killing members of the former regime with impunity, and that "Iraq's new Shiite leaders have little interest in prosecuting those who kill their former enemies" (*ibid.*). It further states that the killings have intensified since January's Shiite victory in the national election, and that Shiite Baathists are most targeted (*ibid.*). According to the same source, "[t]he assassination squads" are likely composed of members of the Badr Brigade, the armed wing of Iraq's largest Shiite political party, the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) (*ibid.*). The leader of the Badr Brigade, Hadi al Ameri, denied the allegations, but admitted that some Shiites were attacking former Baathists (*ibid.*). Information to corroborate this report could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to *Country Reports 2004*, the ongoing violence in Iraq limited access to information on human rights violations during 2004 (28 Feb. 2005). The same source further described a "climate of extreme violence" in which politically and religiously motivated kidnappings and killings occurred, despite appeals for tolerance by religious leaders (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005).

Information on state protection available to those seen as supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

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USA Today . 25 January 2005. Steven Komarow. "Zarqawi Lieutenant Captured, Iraqis Say." <http://www.usatoday.com/news/World/Iraq/2005-01-24-alqaeda-arrest_x..htm> [Accessed 1 Apr. 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International, *Christian Science Monitor* , Freedom House, Global Policy Forum, Globalsecurity.org, Human Rights Watch, *Iraq Daily* , Thinking Peace, World News Connection.

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